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Atari Online News, Etc.
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->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"
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Well, here we are, nearing the end of another year. The holidays are upon us once again. We actually got our shopping done, with a week to spare this year! Everything went without a hitch for a change. No last minute shopping because I forgot someone on my list! It also makes for a more relaxing vacation! We've already attended a couple of holiday gatherings, and likely one or two more to come. But, we're managing to get in some rest along the way.

I don't have too much to say this week. But, I do want to wish all of you a very happy holiday season. I hope that all of your holiday wishes come true. And please remember that while you're enjoying the festivities, please do so responsibly. Happy Holidays from all of us here at A-ONE!

Until next time...

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Zview, Beta 7

Merry Christmas and happy new year for all the Atarians !

Here a screenshoot:

http://the.zorro.free.fr/beta7.jpg

And the news:

News:

- PDF:
* Huge quality improvement in the PDF font rendering (Atari specific).
* Zoom function added.
* Code upgraded to xpdf 3.01pl1(2005-dec-01).
- Complete EXIF 2.21 support for JPEG image(now, you can see various useful information like when the picture was taken, if the flash of your camera was fired or not, the model of your cam, etc...).

- Now, zView can extract the thumbnails embedded inside JPEG images created with a digital photo-cam.
That means than the thumbnail creation is 20 times faster if the JPEG was created with a camera.
- News options added:
* Skip drive (it’s faster to skip the check of the CD-ROM drive for example).
* Smooth Thumbnail: now, you can smooth the thumbnails with various method. That is very slow and only available on true color or near true color display but the result are perfect (especially with the lanczos computation).
* PDF font anti-aliasing ON/OFF.
* Fit the PDF to the window.
- Utilisation of an embedded font to have the same look on any computers.
- Animated interlaced Gif and animated Gif with transparency now supported.
- More zoom levels for the pictures(25, 50, 100, 150 and 200%, previously: 50, 100, and 200%).
- Some function’s shortcuts added to the toolbars.

Bugs fixes:

- Many fixes in the PDF code(PDF rotated, problems with some fonts, etc..).
- Missing horizontal SLIDER computation in the PDF and image window.
- Little memory leak corrected in the multi-timer function.
- A memory block was not freed in the file_rename function.
- Some redraw fixed (PDF bookmark, etc...).
- Others littles bugs fixed.

Ciao,
Zorro
--
http://the.zorro.free.fr

DGEM 0.20

Bonsoir :)

New version of my Dungeon Master clone, download on my website or directly in the folder http://rajah.atari.org/files/
-> dgem020.zip (1.7 MB, dezipped: 7 MB)

New in this 0.20 Xmas2K5 version
- all the monsters
- hand to hand fighting

Careful, since this version, the program needs more memory.
8 Mo under 16 colors mode, 14 Mo under 256 colors mode.
Under 16 colors mode, some monsters appear with false colors

Minimum requirements :
STeem/Nostalgia/Hatari: TOS 2.06, VDI extended mode, 14 Mo
Falcon/TT/clones: TOS 4.04 (MagiC advised), 256 colors, 14 Mo

In this dungeon, the monsters have 1 health point.
A zoo is present at level -7, via the teleporter.
If you want to modify this or create a new dungeon, use

the Deditor. The current password for this example dungeon
is 'eil3'.

Coming next : throwing objects, casting spells, atmospheric effects,
throwing thing generators on wall... There will be not 0.22 version,
but 1.0.

Hope you'll enjoy. Merry Xmas, and Stay Atari :)

-- Pierre TONTHAT - Rajah Lone / Renaissance
http://rajah.atari.org

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING

compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho, friends and neighbors. Well, here we are again, just a couple of days before Christmas. All the shopping is done, and the preparations mostly finished, and now all that's left to do is wait for "the big day".

I received a couple of emails (but not as many as I thought I was going to though) about last week's 'column'. Most of them were quite nice, and I thank you for them. A few of them, were... ummm... not so nice. The funny thing was that, among the people who emailed me to argue about the Merry Christmas/Happy Holidays debate, all but one actually agreed with me. Most of the dissenting emails simply missed my point that greetings are given, not taken, and thought that it was rude to tell people what greeting they should use. That was my point exactly, and I thank everyone who agreed with me even though they didn't realize it.

There was one email, however, that was just from outer space. The writer was adamant that there was only one proper greeting for the season and would countenance no other possibility. The general thread of his email seemed to be that he had the right to demand that he was right. Just between you and me, I think he was an Amiga user. <chuckle>

Anyway, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish you and yours a happy, healthy and safe holiday. Watch yourself on the roads, since traffic seems to be a little more tricky than usual this year. And please, please, don't drink and drive. It's just not worth it.

Okay, I'm done preaching. Let's get to the news, hints, tips and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup

Jo Even Skarstein asks about converting 1ST Word Plus documents:

"I recently found some old disks with lots of documents I wrote in the 80’s, all of them in 1ST Word Plus format. I’d like to convert them to a current format like RTF or HTML, even plain text is OK. The obvious solution is to use 1ST Word Plus and export to plain text, but 1ST Word Plus doesn’t work on my Milan. Are there any utilities that can do this? Or perhaps another editor/word processor that reads these files?"

Ekkehard Flessa tells Jo Even:

"It definitely does on my Milan. German version 3.20TT of 1990.

If I remember correctly, there’s also some converter program, 1WP2RTF or the like.

Signum!4 should also be able to read 1ST Word Plus documents. But that one is not always willing to run on my Milan."

Jo Even tells Ekkehard:

"On my Milan it behaves like on a ST/Falcon with NVDI, i.e. it use a too big font size and totally mess up the display. A pity, because 1ST Word Plus is one of my all-time favourites on the Atari. I’d really like to get my hands on the sources and modernize it a bit.

Thanks, I’ve tried it now and it seems to work. It doesn’t do a perfect conversion, but good enough!"

Peter West adds his experiences:

"On my Falcon with NVDI and MagiC, 1WP works fine. I still use it quite regularly for letters and articles that don’t need fancy fonts.

Incidentally, if IdeaList runs on your Milan, you can use that to print out 1WP documents with all the attributes (but it disregards ruler changes)."

Karsten Lüdersen adds:

"Papyrus (the TOS-Version, not the Windows-version) does read these files."

Jo Even tells Karsten:

"It crashes on my Milan if I try to import a 1ST Word Plus document. I have Papyrus 7.5, perhaps I need a newer version?"

Karsten asks Jo Even:

"Are You sure that the file is OK? With 1ST Wordplus documents in papyrus, I had never any problems.

Try the latest demo version (10.2X) from the papyrus homepage (<http://www.papyrus.de/files/PapX_TOS_Demo.zip>). As far as I know, you

can save documents with this demo version."

Edward Baiz adds his experiences:

"I have version 10 and sometimes it crashes when trying to load or import files. I have a Hades060. What usually works is turing off the cache. For some reason Papyrus works a lot better. After the file loads in, I just turn the cache back on."

Jim DeClercq wonders aloud about dealing with hard drive sectors:

"I had a problem with my TT getting stuck on booting, so to make a long story shorter, I ran the Write test part of Discus, and it found a bunch of bad sectors. This is a very old drive. Then I ran HDD sector test, it found no bad sectors, but showed a number of sectors that looked a little strange for a 4 gig drive, and after that it did not get stuck in the middle of a boot process. What did I do?"

Dr. Uwe Seimet, author of HD Driver, tells Jim:

"...As far as the sector tests of DISKUS and HDDRUTIL are concerned the algorithms are different. HDDRIVER makes a a read test only, whereas DISKUS, depending on the settings, also makes a write test. The results if these different test approaches can differ.

In general SCSI drives are supposed to replace bad sectors by other, reserved sectors as soon as the drive encounters an error."

Roger Burrows of Anodyne Software posts an open invitation to people interested in beta testing:

"We’re ready to start beta testing the next version of our CD writing package, which will support DVD recorders as well. Apart from DVD support, the main new features are:
    . "burnproof" recording
    . support for session-at-once audio CD recording
    . backup of non-TOS partitions

Beta tester requirements:
    . DVD recorder (if possible)
    . a copy of ExtenDOS v4
    . experience with CD Writer Suite v3
    . good command of English or French
    . sufficient time :-) (expect to take 10-20 hours)
Previous beta testing experience would be a help.

If you would like to help out, please email us at:
     beta@anodynesoftware.com
and tell us what hardware & software you have. "

Neil Chester asks about what price a Falcon or two might bring:

"[I’m] Just wondering what is the market value of the following Falcons:

1) MkX cased Falcon CT2b with 20Gb HD

2) SpaceCase cased Falcon CT60 with 40Gb HD

Both with Maximum ST RAM and reasonable FAST RAM."

Ronald Hall tells Neil:

"From what I've seen, bog standard Falcons have been going for typically $300-400 on Ebay. Sometimes higher. Expanded/updated ones are worth more, of course."

From the comp.sys.atari.st.tech NewsGroup
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Richard McKeown asks about networking a Falcon to those darned PCs:

"What is the best way to transfer files from the Falcon to a PC? I have done it with a null modem cable, but of course it's pretty slow. Is there any way to get faster transfer rates with the printer port or even the 8pin LAN port? My PC has the usual printer, serial and RJ45 ethernet ports."

Djuro Pucaric replies to Richard simply:

"Ethernet card for atari!"

Richard replies:

"I actually have 2 networking cartridges, but they don't seem to work with the Falcon (can't remember if I tried them on the STe)."

David Wade adds some well-thought-out options:

"As usual the answer is "it depends on what you want to transfer". If you want to move a small number of files then a floppy disk is probably the best way. If you want to move larger amounts of data you have multiple options:-

1) Get a CD writer. I assume as the TT has an IDE interface you can use a modern IDE CD (or even DVD) writer. This is good as it can preserve directory structure. You could also use a "Superdisk" (LS120) or other large format floppy. Probably need HD Driver. This is also useful as a backup tool.

2) Get a SCSI Flash Memory reader. HD Driver will let you read and write flash memory if its in a Microtech 2-slot SCSI flash memory reader. These crop up from time to time on e-bay. Note last I heard the 3-slot ones don't work. Perhaps Ewe will comment as to why. Watch because many sellers of this won't ship outside the US.

3) As some one else has said get an Ethernet connection. As the falcon has no ASCI port it will have to be an "Ethernec" or a SCSI Ethernet Adaptor. You can get Ethernec's from E-Bay. Probably worth getting a

card as well. You can also build your own (I did, see:

http://www.dwade.freeserve.co.uk/atari/main.html

for details. You will also find the SCSI Ethernet adaptors on E-bay. You might want to consult:

http://www.anodynesoftware.com/ethernet/main.htm

for info on which ones work. I picked a couple up from a ham radio boot sale for 1.00 pound each. (about 2 dollars.) The great thing about doing it this way is that if you have broadband or similar you ST can FTP directly from the many FTP sites around the world.

4) Because the ST (and I assume the Falcon is the same) has a "cut down" printer port many PC transfer programs (that use LAPLINK) can't be ported to the ST. One that I have used and which does work is PARCP. Take a look at:

http://joy.sophics.cz/parcp/

I made my own cable from a standard printer cable. I chopped the end off and soldered a D-25 on. Works pretty well. The registered version is really quite usable.

Hope you find this helpful."

Uwe Seimet jumps in and offers an opinion on option number 2:

"For the Falcon, an IDE flash adapter is most likely the better choice, because it is much cheaper since hardly any hardware is required because CF cards essentially already have an IDE interface."

Dave now asks Uwe:

"Anyone tried any of these with HD Driver? Would they work on my STE with an IDEAL interface?"

Uwe tells Dave:

"I am sometimes using an IDE CF adapter with my Falcon and (of course) HDDRIVER. There are also other users, e.g. with a Milan.
I would expect such an adapter to work with any IDE interface, because all in all the adapter appears like an IDE device to HDDRIVER, provided that the adapter correctly supports the IDE standard."

Ronald Hall adds one more interesting option:

"If you had a burner, you could just transfer them via CD. Just a thought."

Edward Baiz adds this little bit of info:

"Check out Millie Babic's website. He talks about connecting Atari computers to the Internet using an Ethernet connection. That would be

the best way for transfer. http://user.tninet.se/~gcc561r/. Or try using PARCP which uses the printer ports of both computers. You need a special cable that you can either build or buy from the author. http://joy.sophics.cz/parcp/ "

Well folks, that's about it for this week. Tune in again next week, same time, same station for more good stuff. Happy holidays, folks, and again I'll remind you not to drink and drive. The life you save may be mine! 'Till next week, keep your ears open so you'll hear what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Santa Running Short of Xbox 360!
"""""""""""""""""""""""""""""""" California Game Ban Derailed!
Armored Core: Last Raven!
Xbox Tampering Bust! And More!

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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!
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Santa Runs Short of Xbox 360

For those whose shopping lists still include Microsoft's Xbox 360 video game system, it's looking like a blue Christmas.

Most stores and online retailers are sold out of the system, which starts at $300, and don't expect new shipments to satisfy the demand. Auctions on eBay and Craigslist are being bidded up to $1,000; sites such as xbox.clambert.org have sprung up to track availability on the Net.

When word leaked out that Best Buy stores were to have a few systems Sunday, customers began lining up. "I was going to camp out (early Sunday), but when I got there I found people who had already gotten there at 7 p.m. Friday," says Joey Rouse, 31, of Denham Springs, La., who checked a store in Baton Rouge.

Instead, he ordered a system from Best Buy's website, but he's not sure his 360 will arrive in time for him and his two sons to play over the holiday. Nonetheless, "I know what Christmas is really about," he says. "Anything extra is a blessing. If it doesn't come, it doesn't come."

It's unclear when individual stores will get replenishments; most spokesmen

recommend that customers visit local stores and websites. "When the consoles come in, we'll put them out," says Circuit City's Jim Babb.

The 360 is the first of a new generation of game systems due in the next year. Microsoft launched it Nov. 22 and sold 326,000 by the end of the month, according to market-tracking firm The NPD Group.

That falls short of the November 2001 launch of the original Xbox, when Microsoft sold 772,000 in 15 days, says NPD's Anita Frazier. "The marketing and awareness they built up far exceeded the supply," she says.

Microsoft has shipped 600,000 to 700,000 systems so far to North America, fewer than expected, analyst P.J. McNealy of American Technology Research estimates. Another 400,000 have gone to Europe and Japan.

The shortage hasn't hurt Microsoft yet, McNealy says. "Their larger concern is how fast they can ramp up in the first six months of 2006, because Sony is expected to start banging the drums for the PlayStation 3. People will start to get distracted from the Xbox 360 in January."

Microsoft remains confident it will meet its goal of selling 3 million worldwide in the first 90 days. "We are doing our best and working around the clock to get them in the hands of our customers around the world as quickly as possible," says spokeswoman Molly O'Donnell.

Some buyers have had to send their 360s back for glitches. However, those with faulty systems represent only about 1% of customers, says Richard Doherty of consulting firm The Envisioneering Group, comparable to "what has happened before with the iPod and TiVo."

Whether the shortage erodes Microsoft's head start remains to be seen, Doherty says, but for now "it's frustrating for retailers and for consumers not being able to get the hottest product of the holiday season."

Armored Core: Last Raven For Playstation 2 Announces Spring Release

Agetec, Inc., a leading publisher of entertainment software, announced the North American release of Armored Core: Last Raven for the PlayStation 2 computer entertainment system. The final Armored Core series installment for the PlayStation2, Last Raven is the most intense mech game ever, featuring a full story mode where each selected mission has an immediate impact on the ultimate story outcome.

Six months after Armored Core: Nexus ends, two powerful groups, the Alliance and the Vertex, are fighting for world dominance and victory hinges upon the "Raven" pilots. You are a Raven, an elite mech warrior who must choose sides between the fighting powers. Ravens face the ultimate decision in the fight for survival, either to fiercely defend their chosen side or fight alone and face the wrath of all Ravens.

Developed by FromSoftware, the Armored Core series enables players to customize their Core Units with a virtually unlimited variety of options, parts and weapons. Armored Core: Last Raven continues that tradition, but with improved gameplay effects, including for the first time mechs that continue in battle even after losing an arm, leg or head.

Armored Core: Last Raven is scheduled for release in Spring 2006. For more

information on AC: Last Raven and other Agetec titles please visit http://www.agetec.com

Act of War: High Treason

With the first expansion pack for the critically acclaimed Act of War: Direct Action, Eugen Systems and Atari are introducing a massive amount of new features and content to enhance and extend the overall experience.

The new naval combat in provides a fully-fledged modern naval RTS within Act of War. With over a dozen new units designed specifically for naval warfare from Tarawa class carriers, Typhoon submarines and SH-60 Seahawk anti-sub helicopters, to Harrier attack aircraft and Zubr class amphibious assault hovercraft this feature alone promises to make this expansion pack one of the most interesting new RTS offerings in 2006.

To support the naval combat feature, Eugen Systems have developed brand new real-time physics technology to simulate waves and the heave of the ships, ballistics code for ASROCs, Tomahawks, Harpoons and Typhoons and other maritime weaponry, and normal mapping and deep parallax water surfaces for the waves.

Instead of introducing a fourth faction, Eugen Systems have introduced a different kind of feature which promises to mix things up considerably during different phases of the game ? mercenary units. The concept is simple: these are units for hire. Only one player at a time can hire each mercenary unit, and to hire a mercenary team you need to pay a hefty insurance policy. If the mercenaries are injured or even killed, you won’t get a full refund of your insurance deposit at the end of the contract.

The nine mercenary units range from close assault troops with Benelli shotguns, to Roland SAM systems, SU-25 Froogfoot CAS aircraft, and even F-117 stealth bombers that can be called into any part of the map.

For extra variation in the basic game each of the three factions also receives 2-3 new units and as many new upgrades; in some cases they will cover previous holes in the tech tree, in others just reinforce the strength of each side or introduce a new use for existing units and upgrades. Examples are Stinger infantry and Kiowa recon helicopters for the U.S. Army, SCUD launchers and Hind AT-6 Spiral missiles for the Consortium, and GUOS mine upgrades and experimental BLU-144 bombs for the Joint Strike Fighters of the Task Force Talon.

Unconventional French developer Eugen System’s third RTS game and their biggest success to date, Act of War: Direct Action, was one of the big PC surprise newcomers of 2005 with unanimous critical acclaim and reviews consistently in the eighties and nineties in both U.S. and Europe. Gamerankings.com rates the game second in the chart of best new RTS games of 2005.

Act of War is an example of the emerging "Action RTS" subgenre light on resource management, more focused on unit construction and troop movement, and with the kind of amazing graphics and technology more usually seen in shooters. It also featured live action cinematics to support a storyline written in cooperation with New York Times bestselling techno-thriller author Dale Brown.

The fast "pick-up-and-play" game mechanics made Act of War very popular in the online multiplayer community, with over 10 million online games completed in less than six months. There are many user-created maps available to the community of at least as high quality as Eugen Systems's own creations; a tell-tale sign of a healthy and thriving audience of fans.

Innovation was found in game pace, game mechanics details and visuals, the possibility to play around with real weapons such as Abrams tanks, A-10 Thunderbolt close air support aircraft, Apache attack helicopters and U.S. Marines ? in real-world locations such as Washington D.C. or San Francisco under very authentic "rules of engagement", was something that appealed to many fans of modern combat, techno-thrillers and RTS games.

Men Face Criminal Charge for Xbox Tampering

U.S. prosecutors have charged three men with copyright infringement for selling modified Xbox consoles that enabled the original video game machine from Microsoft Corp. to play pirated games.

The criminal complaint filed in federal court in Los Angeles on Monday named ACME Game Store co-owners Jason Jones, 34, and Jonathan Bryant, 44, as well as Pei "Patrick" Cai, 32.

The complaint alleges that Jones and Bryant sold Xbox systems that Cai modified with chips and hard drives that allowed users to copy rented or borrowed games onto the console for future play.

All three men are charged with one felony count of conspiracy to commit copyright infringement and to violate the Digital Millennium Copyright Act. The charge of conspiracy carries a maximum possible penalty of five years in federal prison.

Lawyers for the men, who will be summoned to appear in U.S. District Court in Los Angeles in late January, could not be immediately reached for comment.

Jones and Bryant demonstrated the modified Xbox game consoles in their Melrose Avenue store. They charged from $225 to more than $500 for the modifications, depending on the extent of the modifications and the number of games preloaded onto the hard drive, according to a statement from prosecutors and the complaint affidavit obtained by Reuters.

During the investigation, undercover agents with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement paid $265 to have a modification chip, a hard drive and 77 pirated games installed on an Xbox, according to the criminal complaint.

Microsoft released the Xbox 360, the new version of its game console, on November 22 in North America. The premium version of the system sells for $400 and is sold-out at many retail outlets.

The original Xbox was released in late 2001 and now retails for around $150. Games for the system cost up to $50 each.

Court Blocks California Video Game Sales Restriction

A federal judge has blocked a California law that would have made it illegal to sell or rent violent video games to minors, saying he doubted whether such sales could be banned even if the games were proved to cause violent behavior among children.

The preliminary injunction blocking enforcement of the law was based on a finding that the statute risked violating the right to free speech. The decision comes amid a political and cultural war over the content of video games, which last year accounted for $7.3 billion in U.S. sales and rivaled Hollywood box office receipts.

A week ago, U.S. Sen. Hillary Clinton spearheaded federal legislation aimed at prohibiting the sale of violent or sexually explicit video games to minors, saying the industry’s self-rating system was being inadequately enforced.

But in his ruling issued on Wednesday, U.S. District Judge Ronald Whyte sided with the video game industry, as have other federal and state judges.

The Video Software Dealers Association and the Entertainment Software Association, acting on behalf of video game merchants and publishers, had challenged the proposed California law, which would have imposed civil penalties of up to $1,000 for each violation.

"For the sixth time in five years, Federal courts have now blocked or struck down these state and local laws seeking to regulate the sale of games to minors based on their content, and none have upheld such statutes," said Douglas Lowenstein, president of the ESA, referring to rulings in Illinois, Michigan and elsewhere.

Whyte, who sits on the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, said in his ruling that the ESA and the VSDA "have shown they are likely to succeed on the merits of their claim that the Act violates the First Amendment, or at least that serious questions are raised."

The ruling discussed several violent games, including "Postal II" in which players have the opportunity to shoot, decapitate or urinate on characters such as police officers or school girls.

Some researchers have claimed a link between violent video games and violent behavior in youths. Previous court rulings on laws aimed at restricting game sales have questioned whether such studies have established true cause and effect.

But Whyte said: "It is uncertain that even if a causal link exists between violent video games and violent behavior, the First Amendment allows a state to restrict access to violent video games, even for those under eighteen years of age."

California Assemblyman Leland Yee, a San Francisco Democrat and sponsor of the legislation, called the preliminary injunction "a temporary pause" and said backers of the new law would ultimately prevail.

Many video games that contain violent content carry ratings of "Mature 17+" by the Entertainment Software Rating Board.

That rating agency and video game makers have been under fire since this summer, when game publisher Take-Two Interactive Software Inc. pulled its blockbuster title "Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas" from store shelves

following complaints over the discovery of sex scenes that could be unlocked and viewed with a downloaded program.

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Feds Assess 2-Year-Old Spam Law

Is the two-year-old U.S. antispam law known as the CAN-SPAM act working? The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) will issue a report to Congress on this topic this week, but those who make a living stopping spam believe that the answer is an unequivocal "no."

The report, entitled "Effectiveness and Enforcement of the CAN-SPAM Act," is scheduled to be released at a press event in Washington Tuesday. Officials from state and federal enforcement agencies, as well as the Canadian Competition Bureau, will also announce "criminal law enforcement initiatives targeting illegal spam operations," the FTC said in a statement.

But the difficulty in catching spammers has made the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act largely ineffective, according to executives with spam-blocking companies.

"There isn't a lot of good news to report," said Andrew Lochart, senior director of marketing with Postini. "The percentage of e-mail that's spam, phishing, viruses, or a directory-harvesting attack continues to go up."

At present Postini processes about 500 million messages a day for its customers. About 12 percent of them are flagged as legitimate e-mail, Lochart said.

Jordan Ritter, chief technology officer with Cloudmark, agrees that the law has been ineffective, but he doubts that the FTC report will say so.

"I would expect it not to say that [the law] has been a dismal failure," Ritter said.

Despite several high-profile enforcement actions, however, it has proved to be too difficult to catch and punish most spammers, many of whom operate outside of the U.S., Ritter said. "It's had to track these people down," he said.

If there is any good news to report, it may be that CAN-SPAM is driving some spammers out of the U.S. Security research firm Sophos recently found that while more spam originates in the U.S. than any other country, the percentage of worldwide spammers within U.S. borders is dropping. In the first six months of 2005, U.S. computers were responsible for about 26 percent of the world's spam, down from 42 percent the previous year.

The CAN-SPAM Act was signed into law two years ago last week.

Microsoft Kills Mac Internet Explorer

Microsoft will stop supporting the Mac version of Internet Explorer at the end of 2005. The move follows a decision in June 2003 to end code development for the browser. At that time, Microsoft had predicted it would end support within a few years of letting the product sit idle.

Although users still can download Internet Explorer for Mac from the Microsoft site, the company has recommended that users move to other Web browsers, such as Apple's Safari.

The decision to pull the plug on Mac Internet Explorer was surprising, said Forrester Research analyst Nate Root, but not shocking.

Development for the browser had ceased at version 5, he pointed out, putting Mac IE on a kind of technological life support.

To go forward, Microsoft had to make a decision on whether to end the product altogether or invest in additional development.

"To get it up to the level of Safari would have required significant investment and development efforts from Microsoft," said Root. "They would have had to restart the whole development cycle to get it up to the level of state-of-the-art."

The decision to end Mac IE rather than put more energy into the project could be an acknowledgement, in part, about the preferences of Mac users, Root noted.

"It's safe to say that most of the kind of folks who buy Macs wouldn't relish running Internet Explorer on their machines," he noted. "So Microsoft probably didn't think that it was worth it to try to win them over."

Many Mac users prefer Safari, he said, because Apple has kept the browser updated with new features, whereas Mac IE has languished.

But Microsoft's rejection of Mac IE still is somewhat eyebrow-raising, Root believes. "Now that the browser wars have heated up again, with Firefox being the obvious catalyst to challenge Microsoft, it's a little surprising that Microsoft would choose to abandon the Mac platform rather than reinvent on it," he said.

EBay Scraps Plans to Offer Live Pets

Internet auctioneer eBay Inc. has canceled plans to allow live pets to be sold on its Web site after receiving thousands of angry letters from users.

The San Jose-based company has long banned the sale of live animals except fish and snails, and officials said Monday they were scrapping plans to create a separate classifieds category that would feature free ads from animal shelters and paid ads from breeders.

Over the weekend, an eBay manager revealed in a posting to an online message board that the company was considering lifting the ban, prompting letters from more than 2,000 users, most of whom urged that the ban remain, said company spokesman Hani Durzy.

Users were worried the listings would encourage puppy mills, where animals are sometimes bred in unsanitary conditions, and that it would be difficult to differentiate between legitimate animal shelters and unsavory sources.

"The feedback was pretty overwhelming," Durzy said. "Farms and for-profit commercial breeders wasn't something that they wanted to see."

Booming sales of pet supplies - and the possibility that users may want a pet listing service - had prompted the company to reconsider its ban on the sale of live animals, Durzy said.

Microsoft Odd Man Out in AOL-Google Deal

America Online is preparing to seal a deal with Google Inc. that will deepen their relationship while leaving Microsoft Corp. as the spurned suitor.

The software titan's failure to woo AOL away from Google in favor of its own search technology highlights the uphill battle Microsoft faces as it tries to gain traction in the lucrative business of selling online ads.

Yet industry analysts say the lost bid also shows that Microsoft, its fiercely competitive culture notwithstanding, wasn't willing to go to unreasonable lengths to make a deal work.

"I think they've learned that you don't do a deal at any price just to do a deal. You do a deal that makes sense for you," said analyst Michael Gartenberg with Jupiter Research.

AOL parent Time Warner Inc. and Google were expected to announce this week a broadening of their search and advertising partnership after a long courtship in which Yahoo Inc. was also, for a time, a suitor.

In a five-year deal, Google would pay $1 billion for a 5 percent stake in AOL, said one executive familiar with Time Warner's position. Google also agreed to integrate AOL's video clips in its fledgling video service and highlight AOL's properties among the search engine's keyword ads, also known as sponsored links.

The executive said AOL also would get an undisclosed amount of credit to buy such sponsored links on Google's network. And it would be permitted to display graphics in the ads, a novelty for a Google ad partner.

Microsoft, by contrast, wasn't interested in a cash investment in AOL, say officials familiar with both sides of the talks. The software maker had tried to persuade AOL to set up a shared online advertising business in which both companies held a stake, according to a person familiar with the Microsoft camp. The officials spoke on condition they not be named because the discussions were confidential.

That doesn't ease the sting to Microsoft, which was late to develop its own

search engine technology and recently launched its own platform for the lucrative business of selling paid ads that often accompany search results.

A deal with AOL would have jumpstarted both efforts.

"It slows their progress. It doesn’t eliminate their progress," said Marianne Wolk, research analyst with Susquehanna Financial Group.

The deal also would have been a coup if only because it would have meant a loss for Google.

White-hot in the eyes of investors, Google is showing early success in profiting from the movement of computing from the desktop to the Web. That could eventually pose a massive threat to Microsoft’s core businesses.

"It clearly would’ve given them bragging rights and it would have done Google a lot of damage," said analyst Rob Enderle, taking Google down a peg.

On the other hand, Enderle said, the stakes were significantly higher for Google to make a deal work.

AOL is Google’s biggest customer, accounting for about $420 million, or about 10 percent, of Google’s revenue during the first nine months of this year, according to regulatory filings. Losing the deal would have represented a blow to both the company’s revenue and its image as the search market leader.

Also, while online search technology is at the center of Google’s business, Microsoft’s MSN online unit represents just a portion of its business and the company still makes the bulk of its money from its Windows and Office franchises.

"For Microsoft it was kind of a nice to have," Enderle said. "For Google it was a must have."

A deal with Microsoft would have been considerably riskier for AOL since Google’s online advertising business is more firmly established and Microsoft is the relative newcomer.

"Given that there was a fairly successful relationship already established between AOL and Google, the old maxim of ’if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it’ certainly would be coming into play," said David Garrity, director of research for Investec’s U.S. operations.

Still, Garrity thinks Microsoft inability to strike a deal shows that the software giant, which recently announced a massive push into Web-based software and services, still has work to do if it wants to compete effectively with Google, Yahoo and others online.

As it moves to launch a new set of Internet-based offerings for things like checking e-mail and doing business tasks, Microsoft is weathering criticism that it is losing ground to younger, more nimble competitors.

The software gaint recently announced a reorganization that was aimed in part at addressing such bureaucratic woes.

"I do think from a cultural standpoint that Microsoft is not yet quite thinking in the way that they need to competitively," Garrity said.

EU Threatens Microsoft With Daily Fines

Europe’s competition regulator threatened U.S. software giant Microsoft with daily fines on Thursday for failing to comply with antitrust sanctions a year after a top European Union court ruled it must obey.

The European Commission said it may fine Microsoft up to 2 million euros ($2.37 million) a day unless it complies with an order to provide key information to allow rivals’ group servers to work with its ubiquitous Windows operating system.

"I have given Microsoft every opportunity to comply with its obligations. However, I have been left with no alternative other than to proceed via the formal route to ensure Microsoft’s compliance," EU Competition Commissioner Neelie Kroes said in a statement.

The Brussels EU executive said Microsoft had five weeks, until January 25, to reply and show it was in compliance with the EU demands. Any fines would be retroactive to December 15, it said.

Microsoft called the move unjustified and said it was doing its best to obey the European antitrust watchdog’s landmark March 2004 ruling, but that Brussels kept piling on new demands.

The company vowed to contest the latest decision to the full extent allowed by EU law including by demanding an oral hearing, which can take months to organize, stringing out the procedure.

Alan Davis, a technology analyst with brokers McAdams Wright Ragen in New York, said the threatened fine could come to about $600 million a year after taxes and would cut his full-year earnings forecast of $1.33 by 5.5 cents a share or 4 percent.

"It would be significant, but not devastating," Davis told Reuters. But he added that he expected Microsoft to act at the last minute to avoid having to pay the fine.

"They’ve tended to do things at the 11th hour," he said. "It’s a cat and mouse game with Microsoft. I doubt that it will happen."

Officials at Oracle Corp., one of Microsoft’s biggest competitors, declined comment on the situation.

The Commission ruled in 2004 that Microsoft had abused its global dominance by leveraging its near monopoly in the market for PC operating systems and for media players to squelch rivals.

It imposed a record 497 million euro fine and forced Microsoft to sell a version of Windows without the Windows Media Player software used to watch films and listen to music, giving rivals a fairer chance to compete.

At stake now is a part of that decision requiring Microsoft "to disclose complete and accurate interface documentation which would allow non-Microsoft work group servers to achieve full interoperability with Windows PCs and servers."

Microsoft said in a statement the Commission’s latest demand "can open the

door to the production of clones of parts of the Windows operating system" and went beyond the scope of the original EU decision.

"We have now responded to more than 100 requests from the Commission. We continue working quickly to meet the Commission's new and changing demands. Yet every time we make a change, we find that the Commission moves the goal post and demands another change," said Microsoft General Counsel Brad Smith.

The Commission said that in its view, supported by two reports from a Monitoring Trustee appointed by mutual agreement, Microsoft had not yet provided full specifications.

The Court of First Instance, the EU's second-highest court, rejected Microsoft's appeal to suspend the measures last December and warned it would face a daily fine if it did not comply with its obligation by December 15, 2005.

The software giant's appeal against the substance of the EU antitrust case is still pending and the Court of First Instance hopes to hold a hearing by early spring.

EU Competition spokesman Jonathan Todd said Microsoft would also have a right to appeal any fines to the EU courts.

It was the first time the EU executive had made use of new powers enacted last year to impose daily penalties for noncompliance in antitrust cases, he told a news conference.

The Commission said that Microsoft had indeed revised the interoperability information it was obliged to disclose, but the data was incomplete and inaccurate.

The Monitoring Trustee had found that "any programmer or programming team seeking to use the Technical Documentation for a real development exercise would be wholly and completely unable to proceed on the basis of the documentation."

"Overall, the process of using the documentation is an absolutely frustrating, time-consuming and ultimately fruitless task," the Commission quoted the trustee, British Professor Neil Barrett, as saying.

Todd said the company could ask for an extension of the deadline as well as an oral hearing, which would be open to member states and all interested parties.

Asked whether an oral hearing would delay the imposition of fines, Todd told reporters: "The deadline is five weeks... If they don't comply, they'll have to pay the fine every day."

He said other issues remained open in its appraisal of the Microsoft case, including the royalties charged by Microsoft for interoperability information.

Latest Tax Tool: 'Internet Shaming'

Tax scofflaws, beware. State governments are combining new technology with

old-fashioned shame to goad delinquent taxpayers to pay up.

At least 18 states have launched websites to post the names of people and businesses that owe back taxes. Maryland calls its website "Caught in the Web." In South Carolina, it's "Debtor's Corner." Wisconsin on Jan. 3 will launch "website of Shame."

Advocates of so-called Internet shaming say it's an inexpensive way to capture millions of dollars at a time when many states have tight budgets and seek politically viable ways to find more revenue.

"Raising taxes is a very radioactive strategy," says Sujit CanagaRetna, a fiscal analyst with the Council of State Governments, a non-partisan group that provides policy information to states. "This is another way to bring in more (of) what is owed to the state in an innovative way that has proven to be fairly successful. It's gathering more popularity across the country."

Georgia's online delinquent tax list has collected at least $19.6 million since it went up in February 2004. Colorado's website has raked in $11 million. Kansas went online in March.

"NOTICE OF PENDING INTERNET POSTING," began the letter the Wisconsin Department of Revenue recently sent to more than 7,000 people and businesses who owe the state at least $25,000 each in sales, income, corporate or other taxes. Wisconsin is owed $771 million in back taxes, about 7% of the $11.5 billion it collected last year. The state isn't expecting the website to recoup all of it. Its goal: $1.5 million a year.

The threat of online exposure is working. At least 88 Wisconsin residents and 21 businesses have agreed to settle debts totaling $7.9 million. "The real success of the program is before the postings are made," says Geraldine Conrad, spokeswoman for the Illinois Department of Revenue. "People are motivated to pay."

Some tax specialists worry about the Internet shaming trend. "How are people going to be compensated when, inevitably, mistakes are made?" says Pete Sepp, spokesman for the National Taxpayers Union, a non-partisan watchdog group.

Santa Worm Hits Messaging Networks

With the holidays upon us, the name of Santa Claus is being used for evil rather than good by worm developers, who have targeted major instant-messaging systems with a holiday-themed virus.

The IM.GiftCom.All worm has made an appearance on several messaging networks, including America Online, Microsoft MSN, and Yahoo.

The worm attempts to dupe you into believing that a friend has sent you a link to a harmless file. If you click on the file, you see an image of Santa. While viewing it, the worm attempts to install a rootkit on your system.

Rootkits are frequently used to circumvent security software and give an attacker remote control of a machine. Once the attacker is inside your system, the worm harvests your instant-message contact lists for subsequent

infections.

The new worm is not surprising to many security researchers because holiday-themed threats often occur just as people are swapping online cards and forwarding holiday messages to each other.

The fact that the threat appears in instant-messaging systems also does not come as a shock, considering the phenomenal growth rate in the number of innovative new worms and viruses over the past year.

Since the start of 2005, messaging-related security threats have been growing each month, according to messaging-security firm IMLogic.

"The difficulty is that worm developers are using tactics that have been successful in e-mail campaigns," said IMLogic chief technology officer Jon Sakoda. "They're able to mutate earlier worms and try different strategies, and that's giving them a level of sophistication."

Another problem is that users still are not fully aware that worms and viruses can move through messaging systems, Sakoda added.

In corporate environments, threats like the recent Santa Claus worm can be especially nasty because some employees use instant-messaging applications on the sly, without the knowledge of the I.T. staff.

"CIOs should definitely know what's on their network, and what users are doing," said Sakoda. "If they think employees aren't using instant messaging just because it's not allowed, then they better think again."

Icahn Seeks to Derail Google As Partner of AOL

Dissident shareholder Carl Icahn on Monday labeled as "disastrous" a new deal set to be unveiled this week between Time Warner Inc.'s America Online unit and Web search leader Google Inc., as the billionaire investor argued that AOL could do better.

Icahn said in a letter to Time Warner's board of directors that the company appeared to be on the verge of a "disastrous decision" following reports it is in talks to sell a 5 percent stake of its AOL Internet unit to Google Inc.

Icahn, whose group has a 3.1 percent stake in Time Warner, said he feared a Google pact may preclude a merger or other deals with the likes of eBay Inc., Yahoo Inc., IAC/InterActiveCorp, or Microsoft Corp.

"Like all shareholders, I am not opposed to Time Warner entering into an AOL transaction that creates long-term value," Icahn wrote. "However, I am deeply concerned that the Time Warner board may be on the verge of making a disastrous decision concerning an agreement with Google," he said.

In the past several months, Icahn has blasted Time Warner's every move as falling short of realizing the company's full value. He has hired investment bank Lazard Ltd to wage a campaign to replace a majority of Time Warner's directors.

A Time Warner spokesman declined to comment. "There's nothing new here, and given that, we're not going to comment," spokeswoman Kathy McKiernan said.

A Google spokesman was not immediately available to comment.

Shares of Google, which traded to record intra-day high level of $446.21, up 3.7 percent on the day, turned tail and fell back on news of Icahn's opposition to the potential new search and advertising deal between AOL and Google.

Icahn, who has said he is waging an "all-out proxy battle" to force Time Warner to step up asset sales and streamline, cited a recent report by Goldman Sachs that argued that Google may not be the best long-term partner for America Online.

Wall Street analysts debated whether the $1 billion, which sources said Google was prepared to pay AOL for a 5 percent stake, was a meaningful calculation of the implied overall value of AOL - $20 billion - if it were spun-off.

Some analysts groused that the investment could simply be an expedient way for Google to keep AOL as a key customer and thwart rival Microsoft from gaining a foothold in advertising. Citigroup analyst Mark Mahaney calculated that AOL's business declined to just 1.9 percent of Google's net revenue recently.

Another financial analyst, who declined to be named, said Google may view the $1 billion stake as a small down payment to avert the loss of AOL as its biggest single customer and thereby defend its lofty $125 billion market capitalization.

France Lawmakers Endorse File-Sharing

A French government crackdown on digital piracy backfired Thursday as lawmakers rebelled by endorsing amendments to legalize the online sharing of music and movies instead of punishing it.

The vote by members of France's lower house dealt a setback to Culture Minister Renaud Donnedieu de Vabres, who introduced the draft legislation. Showbiz and cultural celebrities protested the latest move, an indication that the amendments' supporters may eventually have to back down.

Under the original proposals, those caught pirating copy-protected material would have faced $360,000 in fines and up to three years in jail.

An 11th-hour government offer to give illegal downloaders two warnings prior to prosecution was not enough to stem the rebellion. Instead, the amendments voted would legalize file-sharing by anyone paying a monthly royalties duty estimated at $8.50.

Music labels and movie distributors have suggested the amendments would break international laws on intellectual property, and French actors and musicians lined up to condemn the surprise vote.

"To legalize the downloading of our music, almost free of charge, is to kill our work," venerable rocker Johnny Hallyday said in a statement.

The actors' and musicians' branch of France's largest trade union, the CFDT, said the plan "would mean the death of our country's music and

audiovisual industries."

The proposed royalties duty amounts to a "Sovietization" of the arts, said Bernard Miyet, president of the French music composers' and publishers' organization SACEM.

"You're talking about an administered price, set by a commission without regard to the music and film economy," Miyet said.

But UFC-Que Choisir, France's largest consumer group, said the plan would create a "new area of freedom allowing Internet users access to cultural diversity and fair payment for creators."

Days before the parliamentary debate, consumer activists delivered a 110,000-signature petition to the culture ministry criticizing the draft bill. The right of consumers to make copies of their music and videos for private use is enshrined in European law, and media companies have faced legal action in France for selling copy-protected CDs and DVDs.

The ruling conservatives' parliamentary leader, Bernard Accoyer, rejected government demands for a fresh vote Thursday, saying lawmakers will first take time to listen to all sides, "in particular the artists and creators."

The final lower-house vote is not expected until after Jan. 17, when deputies return from their winter break. The bill requires only one further vote in the Senate to become law, under the emergency procedure invoked by the government to comply with a 2001 European Union directive on digital piracy.

Santa Goes High Tech on the Internet

Santa Claus is going high-tech as more children and parents are able to reach the jolly old elf online.

"We can use this technology to our advantage and provide a much more believable experience for our kids," said Anne Gaskell, co-owner of SantaSpeaking.com.

The Sioux City-based Web site, launched last year, features an online form where parents, friends and relatives can request personalized letters and phone calls, which last three minutes or more depending on how many children are whispering - or shouting - their Christmas wishes in Santa's ear.

Gaskell said the company has made about 1,000 calls this season, with many more requests rolling in just days before Christmas.

The live calls range in cost from $15 to $39.95 - add $5 if the call if made after Dec. 15. SantaSpeaking.com also offers a selection of MP3 and CD recordings of the holiday conversations, in which Santa lets little children know that he's aware if they have been naughty or nice.

"When you go to the mall, Santa's not able to know all of those details," Gaskell said. "Parents are just overjoyed with the reaction their kids are getting - that Santa knows they've been stealing cookies from the cookie jar or fighting with their brother or sister.

"It just blows them away," she said.

Gaskell, the mother of three children under age 5, said she started the Web site because "I wanted something a little bit better for my children."

A series of four prerecorded telephone calls update the tiny tots on Santa's travels on Christmas Eve. Kids also can log on at noon on Dec. 24 to watch Santa's departure from the North Pole through a CG animation video - the type of technology used in the holiday hit "The Polar Express."

And if that's not enough to update kids on the comings and goings of Mr. Claus, he's even taken up blogging at the site.

High-tech services from Santa are available on Web sites popping up around the nation and world. Other sites feature names such as santasayshello.com, livesantacalls.com, santacalledme.com, santaphonecalls.com and chatwithsanta.com.

At SantaSpeaking.com, parents also can order personalized letters that include the child's name, age and activities. Those cost $14.95 and arrive in a plastic tube filled with festive "magic dust" to be sprinkled outside the home to "help attract the reindeer."

A sample letter, addressed to young Lydia, reads:

"I know that you have been doing so well in preschool, picking up your toys and learning to ride your bike. Don't worry about accidentally cutting your sister's hair, we know that it's impossible to be good all the time."

The cheery and colorful Web site, which features a live reindeer cam and children's games, was developed by a Rhode Island company, and the graphics come from a designer in Ohio. The Santas make their calls from Omaha, Neb., contracted through a call center.

According to a press release issued by Gaskell earlier this month, About.com and Google Zeitgeist report that the word "Santa" has been the 6th most popular search in December.

By comparison, a separate survey found the number of Santa visits to shopping malls has dropped about 40 percent between 2001 and 2003, Gaskell said.

"To skeptics, the thought of going online to find Santa can sound high-tech and impersonal," Brandon Lobaugh, Gaskell's business partner, said in a statement. "But the live phone call from Santa in reality is more believable and more in keeping with the Santa Claus legend because they are highly personalized by the parents ... Santa knows all."

On the Net:

SantaSpeaking.com: http://www.santaspeaking.com/Index.aspx

Web Sites Let Users Send E-Mail to Future

In the year 2009, on the 25th of April, a man named Greg is supposed to get an e-mail. The e-mail will remind Greg that he is his best friend and worst enemy, that he once dated a woman named Michelle, and that he planned to

major in computer science.

"More importantly," the e-mail says, "are you wearing women’s clothing?"

The e-mail was sent by none other than Greg himself - through a Web site called FutureMe.org.

The site is one of a handful that let people send e-mails to themselves and others years in the future. They are technology’s answer to time capsules, trading on people’s sense of curiosity, accountability and nostalgia.

"Messages into the future is something that people have always sought to do," said Paul Saffo, director of the Institute for the Future. "In a way, it’s a statement of optimism."

Matt Sly, 29, came up with the concept for FutureMe.org about four years ago. He was inspired one day after recalling how during his education he had been given assignments to write letters to himself.

Sly, who partnered with 31-year-old Jay Patrikios of San Francisco on the project, said the site has made maybe $58 through donations. He is adamant that FutureMe.org is not a reminder service and that users should think long-term.

The site lets people send messages 30 years from now, though Sly’s numbers show most users schedule their e-mails to be sent within three years.

"We want people to think about their future and what their goals and dreams and hopes and fears are," he said. "We’re trying to facilitate some serious existential pondering."

He said a large number of the messages sent do one of two basic things: tell the future person what the past person was doing at the time, and ask the future person if he or she had met the aspirations of the past person.

"The tone of the past person is not always friendly," said Sly, now a Yale University graduate student. "It’s often like ’Get off your lazy butt.’"

Recently, Forbes.com jumped on the idea, offering an "e-mail time capsule" promotion. More than 140,000 letters were collected over about six weeks. Nearly 20 percent of the messages sent are supposed to land in the sender’s inbox in 20 years; others requested shorter time frames. Forbes.com is partnering with Yahoo! and Codefix Consulting on the project.

"A lot of people have kind of been freaked out by it," said David Ewalt, a Forbes.com writer who worked on the project. "It really makes you stop and think about your life in a way that you usually don’t."

Another type of future message service can be found at sites such as myLastEmail.com or LastWishes.com, which promise to send messages to loved ones (or less-than-loved ones) after you die.

Paul Hudson, co-founder of the International Time Capsule Society, said e-mail time capsules were new to him.

"Part of the value of time capsules are that they are thought processes in the present," said Hudson, a historian who teaches at Georgia Perimeter College. "You define yourself when you do a time capsule. It might be a good exercise in introspection."

But sometimes the past is best left behind, said Saffo, who personally finds the whole thing "sad and really weird."

"The lesson about all these things, it’s the lesson from time capsules, is you have to be careful lest you set yourself up for enormous embarrassment in two decades," Saffo said. "Do you really want to be reminded that you thought ABBA was cool?"

Service providers try to make the delivery process fail-safe through partnerships or back up software, and they urge people to hang on to their e-mail address, but there’s no ironclad guarantee that the message will ever arrive.

Technology changes. Companies go out of business. Spam filters might get in the way.

Still, that hasn’t deterred a sizable number of people from signing up.

On FutureMe.org, where more than 112,000 messages have been written, many writers are confident enough to make their e-mails - though not necessarily their names - public.

"I hope that I’ve learned to take responsibility for my actions - to not be passive aggressive and to not avoid things that are scary for me," one wrote. "I hope I’ve changed a little."

"Are you missing an eye? If so, I apologize." wrote another.

And, of course, the cautious optimist: "Hell, I hope you’re still alive."

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On the Net:

http://www.FutureMe.org

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